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Illegal Israeli actions in Occupied East Jerusalem and the rest of the Occupied Palestinian Territory

Security Council
Sixty-fourth year

Letter dated 26 October 2009 from the Permanent Observer of Palestine to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I write to you today with urgency regarding the perpetration once again of hostile and aggressive actions in Occupied East Jerusalem at the sacred compound of Al-Haram Al-Sharif. We reiterate our appeal for due attention to be given to such acts of violence, provocation and incitement, which threaten to exacerbate already high tensions and sensitivities and to further destabilize the situation on the ground.

In the early morning hours of Sunday, 25 October, the Israeli occupying forces stormed Al-Haram Al-Sharif compound and fired stun grenades, tear gas and rubber-coated steel bullets at Palestinian worshippers. The Israeli attack resulted in the injury of at least 30 civilians and the detention of 20 others, including Mr. Hatim Abdul Qader, the former Palestinian Authority Minister of Jerusalem Affairs. Also among the injured were women, children, and five Palestinian journalists. Despite the use of force and the wounding of many, the Israeli occupying forces refused to grant the medical teams access to evacuate the injured for more than three hours.

The Palestinian civilians who had been at the holy compound gathered there the night before following calls by radical Jewish clerics to their followers to go to the compound. There was also a call by an extremist Israeli religious group, "Eretz Israel Shelanu", which had urged its followers "to properly arise to the Temple Mount". According to Israeli reports, a number of Israeli lawmakers and rabbis were among those expected to participate. Instead of taking appropriate measures against such acts of provocation and incitement by Israeli extremists that inflame religious tensions and fuel senseless violence, the Israeli occupying forces decided to turn their brutality against Palestinian civilians who had been at the holy compound. Following the raid at Al-Haram Al-Sharif, the occupying Power deployed large military and police contingents throughout Occupied East Jerusalem and imposed measures of collective punishment in and around the city.

The clashes that ensued following this confrontation are painfully reminiscent of previous provocations, sanctioned by successive Israeli Governments, which have

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resulted in dangerous escalations on the ground in the Occupied Palestinian Territory. It is imperative to recall that these offensive acts of incitement and provocation are rooted in the Government's extremist position on and incessant aggression against Jerusalem and are constantly fuelled by the incitement of Israeli officials who promote and support Israeli settlers and extremists. In this regard, just hours following the attack on Palestinian civilians at Al-Haram Al-Sharif, a group of Israeli extremists held an event in Jerusalem that was attended by a number of Knesset members and chief rabbis during which calls were made by radical speakers like Hillel Weiss, Moshe Feiglin, Rabbi Yehuda Glick and Rabbi Dov Lior to take control over the holy compound.

As noted in our previous letters on the situation in Occupied East Jerusalem, we reiterate that recent events are the product of predetermined and wilful efforts, with official Israeli complicity and support, to sabotage the efforts to resume the peace process. Such a clear pattern of illegal Israeli actions in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, particularly in and around Occupied East Jerusalem, run against repeated international calls as well as the international will to end the occupation and to end this tragic and bitter conflict. As evidenced by history, over the past decade and a half, Israel has spared no effort to obstruct peace efforts, calling into serious question its credibility as a peace partner and the viability of the process itself.

At this critical juncture, the international community cannot stand idly by as Israel, the occupying Power, persists in illegal and aggressive actions, particularly in Occupied East Jerusalem. The necessary efforts must be exerted, including by the Security Council, to uphold its responsibilities and legal obligations to protect and enforce international law and prevent an already volatile situation from further escalating. Israel, the occupying Power, must be made well aware that the international community will neither recognize nor condone the illegal acts it is attempting to create and entrench in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including in East Jerusalem.

We thus call for urgent action to compel Israel to cease its illegal practices and to scrupulously abide by all of its legal obligations, including under the Fourth Geneva Convention. This is imperative for preventing the further deterioration and destabilization of the situation and for ensuring the appropriate environment for the resumption of accelerated peace negotiations for the achievement of the two-State solution through establishing a viable, contiguous, and sovereign Palestinian state with East Jerusalem as its capital and ending the Israeli occupation that began in 1967 in accordance with the relevant Security Council resolutions, the principle of land for peace, the Arab Peace Initiative and the Road Map. Israel must be called upon to prove that it actually is committed to peace and international law and not be permitted to continue with actions totally to the contrary.

This letter is in follow-up to our previous 346 letters to you regarding the ongoing crisis in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, since 28 September 2000. These letters, dated from 29 September 2000 (A/55/432-S/2000/921) to 13 October 2009 (A/ES-10/466-S/2009/534), constitute a basic record of the crimes committed by Israel, the occupying Power, against the Palestinian people since September 2000. For all of these war crimes, acts of State terrorism and systematic human rights violations committed against the Palestinian

people, Israel, the occupying Power, must be held accountable, and the perpetrators must be brought to justice.

I should be grateful if you would arrange to have the text of the present letter distributed as a document of the tenth emergency special session of the General Assembly, under agenda item 5, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Riyad **Mansour**
Ambassador
Permanent Observer of Palestine to the United Nations